

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method of electronically placing wagers between a plurality of users comprising:

- a) a service provider hosting a database of wager offers, the service provider providing an electronic posting area for posting wager offers;
- b) a plurality of wager creators different than the service provider electronically communicating individual wager offers to the service provider's database of wager offers for storage therein, the wager offers including:
 - (i) a wager condition,
 - (ii) a wager payoff offer, and
 - (iii) a wager payoff request;
- c) placing the individual wager offers in the posting area; and
- d) allowing a plurality of wager acceptors to electronically communicate with the posting area to view and directly accept individually posted wager offers without incurring an individual wager service charge.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- e) allowing a visitor, who is not a user, to request additional information about a wager that is displayed on the posting area regardless of a membership status of the visitor.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

- f) allowing the visitor, at any time, to search the database of wager offers in order to find a wager offer in which the visitor is interested in participating.

4. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

- f) allowing a visitor to become a user by creating a user account.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- e) allowing a user to login if the user has a user account.
6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
- f) allowing the user, after logging in, to create a new wager or accept an existing wager offer.
7. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
- f) bringing the user to a screen displaying a history of the user's wager offers, including a status of any pending wager offers, immediately after the user logs in.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein an individual wager acceptor is prompted to confirm and accept terms of a particular wager offer when individual wager acceptor requests to accept the particular wager offer.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein if the individual wager acceptor is not logged in, the individual wager acceptor will be prompted to create a new user account or to log in using an existing user account.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein, when an individual wager creator desires to create a new wager offer, the individual wager creator is prompted to enter terms of the new wager offer.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein if the individual wager creator is not logged in, the individual wager creator will be prompted to create a new user account or to log in using an existing user account.
12. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
- e) displaying public profile information about each user that each individual user entered when setting up or editing a respective individual user account.
13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
- e) allowing an individual wager acceptor to confirm or abort the acceptance of a wager offer in step d).

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - e) displaying public profile information of a particular user upon request, and displaying that particular user's wagering statistics including wins, losses, and disputed wager offers.
15. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - e) allowing an individual wager creator to electronically cast a vote in the posting area about a particular wager offer created by the individual wager creator, the vote including one of "win," "loss" or "no winner."
16. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - e) allowing an individual wager creator to remove a particular wager offer created by the individual wager creator thereby stopping additional individual wager acceptors from accepting the particular wager offer.
17. The method of claim 1, wherein each user has a unique identification from each other user.
18. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - e) a database of user accounts including a unique identification record for each registered user that is utilized by other records and databases to identify each particular user.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the database of wager offers includes:
- i) a wager log table for all wager offers, the wager log table having a record of each wager being authored by a unique wager creator including terms of the wager offer; and
 - ii) a wager transaction table containing records of specific acceptance transactions related to the wager offers in the wager log table.
20. The method of claim 1, wherein the database of wager offers includes:
- a category table for all wager offers, the category table having a record of a category type of each individual wager offer thereby allowing searching based upon the category type.
21. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
- e) a transaction table that includes records of all transactions for each user.
22. The method of claim 1, wherein the wager payoff offer includes one of money, products, services and points.
23. The method of claim 1, wherein the wager payoff request includes one of money, products, services and points.
24. The method of claim 1, wherein the wager payoff offer is different than the wager payoff request.
25. The method of claim 1, wherein the wager condition is based on a determinative outcome of at least one of a sporting event, a public election, a public event, an entertainment award, the weather at a predetermined time and location, a financial indicator value at a particular time and day, and a specific user defined event.

26. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

e) resolving a dispute over an individual wager offer between an individual wager creator and an individual wager acceptor by requesting that users other than the individual wager creator and the individual wager acceptor electronically cast a vote in the posting area to decide the outcome of the individual wager offer.

27. A computer-implemented method of electronically placing wagers between a plurality of users comprising:

a) a service provider hosting a database of wager offers, the service provider providing an electronic posting area for posting wager offers;

b) a plurality of wager creators different than the service provider electronically communicating individual wager offers to the service provider's database of wager offers for storage therein, the wager offers including:

(i) a wager condition having a determinative outcome,

(ii) a wager payoff offer,

(iii) a wager payoff request,

(iv) a start date, and

(v) a close date;

c) placing the individual wager offers in the posting area;

d) allowing a plurality of wager acceptors to electronically communicate with the posting area to view and directly accept individually posted wager offers, between the start date and the close date of the respective individually posted wager offers, without incurring an individual wager offer service charge;

e) determining for a particular wager offer, after the close date and based on the particular determinative outcome of the particular wager offer, whether (i) the creator of the particular wager offer wins, (ii) the acceptor of the particular wager offer wins, (iii) neither the creator or the acceptor of the particular wager offer wins, or (iv) if there is a dispute between the creator and the acceptor of the particular wager offer; and

f) resolving the dispute over the particular wager offer between the creator and the acceptor of the particular wager offer, if one exists, by requesting that users other than the creator and the acceptor of the particular wager offer electronically cast a vote in the posting area to decide the outcome of the particular wager offer.

28. A networked system for electronically placing wagers between a plurality of users comprising:

- a) a website having web pages, the website being configured to be accessed by a plurality of users and to permit users to offer wager offers directly to other users without incurring an individual wager service charge; and
- b) a database of wager offers placed by some of the plurality of users, the database including:
 - (i) records of wager terms;
 - (ii) records of users placing wager offers;
 - (iii) records of users accepting wager offers; and
 - (iv) records of wager outcomes.